CLOTHING AND PANOPLY OF THE ORTHER OF SAINT JOHN

(12th-13th centuries)

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A lot has been written about military orders, but it is not the objective of this article to collect the main works and manuals related to the order of the Hospital of St John. Historians such as Jonathan Riley-Smith, María Luisa Ledesma Rubio, Carlos de Ayala Martínez, Carlos Barquero Goñi and a long etcetera of great authors who have made incalculable contributions to the study and understanding of the sociopolitical and economical mechanisms of the military orders are many of the consulted references.

However, the goal of this article is not about the most global aspects of the order of Saint John, but rather it is an attempt to approach a more everyday reality, such as the day-to-day clothing in this order: the mandatory and identifying aspects of the garments worn by the Hospitallers in the twelfth and, above all, the thirteenth centuries, focusing our attention largely on military clothing. For this, we have based ourselves mainly on the original statutes of the order, but also on bulls and historical documents that will offer us some perspectives on these aspects so long forgotten by historiography. It is an article focused on everyday material aspects, which entails a risk when interpreting some sources. For this reason, the present work will try to propose a series of hypotheses that can be discussed, insofar as we lack much information related to the aforementioned aspects. Therefore, this work serves as an approximation to Hospitallers clothing between the 12th and 13th centuries.

"CIVILIAN" CLOTHING

The order of Saint John of Jerusalem was founded with merely hospital objectives and attention to the pilgrims who arrived in the Holy Land[2] and it seems that it lasted well into the 13th century[3]. At first, the Hospital founded in Jerusalem seems to have been attended by Benedictine friars, also known as the "black monks", from whom they may have drawn their mantle[4].

We therefore enter fully into aspects related to clothing, where we find a certain disparity in the sources, something that should not surprise us at all for the Middle Ages. This controversy stems from the fact that the Hospitaller friar dressed in a black habit has usually been kept in mind on whose chest has been sewn a -sometimes- huge eight-pointed white cross and, on top of all this, a black mantle with another white cross on the left side, at shoulder height. Part of this iconography comes to us from late sources, such as some portraits from the 16th-17th centuries ("The Knight of the Clock", by Tiziano, 1550[5]; "Maltese knight portrait", by Bernardo Strozzi, 1640[6]) and 19th century engravings (such as those made by Braun y Schneider[7]) which tried to explain graphically how the military orders dressed in the Middle Ages. Some images are even current, which has distorted our general vision of the order's medieval clothing.

Crosses.

We will start by talking about the use of crosses. In this regard, some authors try to address the use of the cross by mentioning the rule of Raymund de Puy, the first Grand Master of the order, or even alluding to some precepts of Blessed Gerard, because according to them they made clear the intention of wearing a cross both in habit as in mantle, this being eight-

[2] RILEY-SMITH, Jonathan; *Templars and Hospitallers as Professed Religious in the Holy Land*, University of Notre Dame Press, Notre Dame, Indiana, 2010, p. 15.
[3] *Ibidem*, pp. 23 y 36.
[4] *Ibidem*, p. 15. También en PÉREZ PEÑA, Rafael; *La soberana Orden de Malta a través de diez siglos de Historia y su relación con la acción humanitaria*, Doctoral Thesis, online resource, p. 74.
[5] https://www.museodelprado.es/coleccion/obra-de-arte/el-caballero-del-reloj/e5a31eab-2c59-4962-9a9f-59ceb8c11e62
[6] https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Bernardo_Strozzi_-_Portrait_of_a_Maltese_Knight_-_WGA21927.jpg
[7] https://www.siue.edu/COSTUMES/PLATE16BX.HTML

pointed, something related to the beatitudes[8]. However, we must nuance this statement with two arguments. The first is that the oldest regulations on this point are the statutes initially collected by Raymund de Puy and, in them, it is simply stated that the said cross must be carried on the mantles, something that we will address a little further down; the confusion seems to come from a bad translation. And, secondly, if we go to the iconographic sources of both the 13th and 14th centuries, we will see that these eight-pointed crosses so markedly do not exist.

The main iconographic sources consulted are the extraordinary miniatures of the Cantigas de Santa María[9], which sometimes detail even the smallest aspect of clothing; and, on the other hand, the Libro de Juegos (Book of Games) -also from the 13th century- as well as some images from the 14th century, such as the representation of the Grand Master of the order, Juan Fernández de Heredia[10]. According to these sources, as well as the statutes of the order itself, we can assure that it was not mandatory to wear the cross more than on the mantle, at chest height and, furthermore, with a type of cross that does not seem to be standardized until the fifteenth century, because as we can see in the Cantigas de Santa María, some Greek-style crosses appear, but others are a mixture between Latin and Greek. Likewise, these eight-pointed crosses supposedly mentioned by Raymund de Puy do not appear at all, but are rather patée crosses. Where we can see these crosses of equal size on all sides, is in the Book of Games[11] where, however, they are practically patées. Is it possible that the crosses have not been painted with total accuracy? Or, on the contrary, is it possible that there was a disparity in the typology used? The truth is that the statutes do not make any reference, as we said, to the use of an exact type of cross or the number of points, nor that they must be worn in the "habit and on the mantle", but rather it must be the Holy Cross what they wear “in the mantle” at chest height:

> “*XXVI. Cum devo portar la cros los frayres:*
>
> *Totz los frayres de totas las obediensas que deshoras enavan si faran se uffriran a Dieu e al saint Hospital de Iherusalem porto la cros en lor capas e en lor mantels ad honor de la Sancta Cros divan lor pieys, que Dieus per*

[8] PÉREZ PEÑA, Rafael; *La soberana Orden de Malta… op. cit*., p. 81.
[9] Códice Florentino, nº 275, f103-105.
https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/d/d2/Cantigas_de_Santa_Maria-275-5.jpg
[10] https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/f/f1/Juan_Fern%C3%A1ndez_de_Heredia.jpg
[11] https://www.joseguadalajara.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/clerc9-XIIIeme.jpg

> *aquel senhal e la fe catolica et en las obras d'aquela e en veraya obediensa nos tenha ens garde ens deffenda en arma e en cors am totz nostres befazedors crestias del poder del diable en aquest secgle e en l'autre, amen*"[12].

Therefore, we choose to think that the fact of wearing the cross in that place and of that approximate size (a span, that is, about 22 cm[13]) on the mantle is what would prevail, and not a homogenization of the crosses, something that we can see from the fifteenth century on.

Mantles.

In this way we arrive at another indispensable garment in the order, that is, the mantles used by the Hospitallers. This is an essential garment and the only one that differentiates a Hospitaller from any lay person, who must wear it at all times and not a supposed "habit" in the ecclesiastical way. Our vision of a *frayre* clad in a religious habit and wearing a cloak is given, as we said before, by an anachronistic iconography for the moment under study. The confusion that sometimes arises in this regard, furthermore, revolves around the vocabulary used in the sources, which speak of "habit" and "mantle", which gives us the idea that they are different garments, when in fact they are synonyms. In principle, that garment commonly called "habit" and that we associate with every cleric does not seem to exist; it is not the "corporate" garment, but that function is fulfilled by the mantle, which is where the cross should be. This is inferred from the amount of regulation contained in the statutes regarding the mantles and capes, but not the "habits" understood as a religious garment. To the Hospitallers, the "habit" and the "mantle", as we said, are the same garment, as is inferred from the procedure to follow to accommodate a new member in the order. In this procedure included in the statutes, it seems that the different versions of these carry out a synonymy around this pledge:

[12] BONNET, Marie Rose y CIERBIDE, Ricardo; *Estatutos de la Orden de San Juan de Jerusalén. Edición crítica de los manuscritos occitanos (s. XIV),* Universidad del País Vasco, 2006, p. 98.
[13] *Ibidem*, p. 140.

> "*[…] quar vos deves saber que se vos aves moler o esposa e dema o a l'autre l'esposa vos venia requerre, hom vos levaria l'abit (in other versions, "hostaria lo mantel"*[14]).

As we said, the "habits" as such, are not even included in the statutes among the garments to be had by each *frayre*:

> "*XII. Quant les frayres se devo sagnar e quant de rauba devo aver:*
>
> *[…] e lo frayre deu aver III camisas e tres brayes et I cota e I iupel I guarnacha e I capel e dos mantels, la un am pena e l'autre ses pena e causas de drap de lana e causas de drap de li e tres draps en lo liech e lo quart lo sac*"[15].

So much so that one of the statutes which regulate how the monks must go by the village, stablished that mantles are the piece of clothing that distinguished them and, in case of not wearing them, they should be punished:

> "*LXVII. Cum devo anar per vila los frayres.*
>
> *Estabblit es que los frayres devo anar ordenadamen quan el sanaran per vila e que els porten lor mantels en tal maniera que lor cuebra lor espallas e se non o fa, que los baylieu se puesca planger de lor e sien en VIIa. E se los baylieus no s'en planhian, que lo Maestre se puesca planher dels baylis*"[16].

Thus, what characterizes the clothing of a Hospitaller is actually nothing more than any garment understood as "exterior", such as the raining capes and mantles. The latter, yes, must be black[17].

But why do they appear Hospitallers with duller or almost different colored mantles, as well as brown? If we look closely at the images of the Cantigas, we can see how the author has alternated colors among the group of monks, perhaps with the aim of visually separating them from one another, thus giving rise to the use of different shades of black. But it is also possible that some friars did not wear the black mantle and, as dependent on charities and possibilities of the commendatory, it is probable that they could not access said tonalities, so the use of a brown mantle we could think that it was something normal in some cases, as it

[14] *Ibidem*, p. 266.
[15] *Ibidem*, p. 108.
[16] *Ibidem*, p. 126.
[17] *Ibidem*, p. 127.

appears in the Book of Games. Nor should we forget the fact that the color range had to be wide, since the methods used to achieve them were natural and each print run had to be very different, giving different shades of black; not to mention the chronology referring to the appearance of the color black for clothing, which is much later in a generalized way. It is for all these reasons that we speak of a great heterogeneity in shapes, colors and typologies, which should not surprise us either for the 12th and 13th centuries.

These garments are given to every friar who enters the order, this being, along with bread and water, the only thing that the Hospitallers can ask of the order. Who makes these garments is the *draper* of the *mayso*, who collects already used garments, mends them and delivers them to the *frayres*, the donated, the poor and the sick. The friars, for their part, are prohibited from acquiring new garments outside the *mayso*, having regulations around it[18]. In this way, the Hospitallers were dressed at the disposal of charities, donations and elaborations typical of the *drapier*, so the friars wore, as is inferred from the regulations, poor clothing, but in no case necessarily black. Any color would do as long as it was not prohibited by the statutes. On the other hand, in accordance with the provisions included in the said statutes, it seems that two annual deliveries of clothing (*lieuraso*) were made, one in winter and the other in summer to be able to change clothes except for the mantle, of which they have two garments, one lined and one unlined, probably used depending on the season[19].

Thus, we can observe that this garment, the mantle, is the only mandatory and specially regulated as a distinctive form of belonging to the order. Its compulsory use and the fact that the cross (remember, about 22cm., without any specific typology and at chest height) must be placed exclusively on it, makes it clear as an essential garment among the clothing that every friar must wear.

Tunics and gowns.

Regarding the garments that are seen under the mantle in the Cantigas, we can observe that many Hospitallers, both in this iconographic source and in the Book of Games, wear black

[18] *bidem*, pp. 120, 263, are the most outstanding statutes in this regard.
[19] *Ibidem*, p. 131.

clothing, but also brown[20]. Most likely, it is a gown, collected among the clothing that each *frayre* should have. If we look carefully, we will see that this garment reaches almost to the ankle and the sleeves of these gowns reach just below the elbow, revealing the black tunic they wear underneath. Despite the fact that the regulation on this garment is later than the period we are studying (it dates from 1337), we see that the characteristics match:

> "[…] *los guardacors o guarnachas sia largua per lo cors e longues entro al col del pe sans nulhas poyntas e las marguas sian larguas e longues entro al mieh del bras* […]"[21].

Alluding again to the popularly extended iconography, the fact that these garments are not black may shock us. However, the truth is that, as we said before, at no time do the statutes include any regulations regarding the color of garments that are not outer and mandatory, such as the mantle. It is only specified in the Statutes that all clothing worn by the friars must be of colors allowed by the order, that is, avoiding expensive colors. We also see that some garments appear included in the statutes, but at no time is there any mention that they must carry crosses or must be strictly black, but that these crosses and colors are worn by the mantles or, in any case, the outermost garments, like the rain capes.

Birettas.

Lastly, we'll talk about the kind of headgear that seems to be allowed. And it is that, in 1271, it is established by statute that the *capels de bonet* that the friars want to wear -therefore, it is not mandatory-, cannot be made of silk, or camelot, having to touch or cover their ears[22]. It is not stablished the color of these birettas, so they could be made in any color not forbidden by the statutes and, above all, with no need to wear any cross on them.

Therefore, the color of these bonnets is not established, and they may therefore be of colors not prohibited by the statutes and, in any case, without the need to wear a white cross on

[20] See the images of the Cantigas and the Book of Games.
[21] BONNET, Marie Rose y CIERBIDE, Ricardo; *Estatutos de la Orden de San Juan... op. cit.*, p. 174.
[22] *Ibidem*, p. 113.

them. It is also worth mentioning that the use of these bonnets is not mandatory either and it will not be until the 14th century[23].

Thus, by way of conclusion regarding the "civilian" garments of the order, we will say that the most common, most likely, is that the friars simply wear a tunic of any color not prohibited in the statutes, that is, poor colors typical of a lower estate, as well as a warm garment in winter – a gown, possibly-, whose color is not specified either and, over all these, always the mantle. Could we see, therefore, a Hospitaller dressed in a dark green or light brown skirt - to give examples - and, on top, the black mantle with the white cross? Indeed, according to the statutes that is inferred, leaving behind the vision of some friars covered in black and with crosses everywhere.

MILITARY GARMENTS

As regards the beginning of the military functions of the order, another large number of pages have been written. We, for now, opt for the line that defends the idea that it is not until the second half of the 12th century when a certain notoriety of the military enterprises carried out by the order takes place[24].

The order of the Temple had been distinguished from the beginning for being a militia that brought together nobles[25] who brought their own horses, weapons and trappings to carry out their duties. The Hospital, in this sense, joined the movement initiated by the Temple and brought together nobles who, equipped as feudal lords, went to combat under the banner of the order. But its primary function, at least until well into the 13th century, would not be military[26], but rather assistance, as is clear from the meeting that took place in Acre in 1198. At this meeting, it was about clarifying the future of a new order, the Teutonic; and for this, they were asked to have hospital functions similar to the order of St John, but also militia, such as that of the Temple[27]. Thus, it is clear both in the mentality of those

[23] *Ibidem*, p. 229.
[24] BARQUERO GOÑI, Carlos; *Los caballeros hospitalarios durante la Edad Media en España*, Ed. La Olmeda, Burgos, 2002,p. 155.
[25] RILEY-SMITH, Jonathan; *Templars and Hospitallers*… op. cit., p. 59.
[26] "The Hospitallers fought out of love as an extension of their care of the poor". Ibidem, p. 61.
[27] "[they] should have the regulations of the Hospital of St John concerning the sick and the poor, as in the past, but for the rest should have the rule of the knighthood of the Temple with respect to clerics, knights and

present, and perhaps in the collective, that the Hospital and the Temple had very different functions[28]. Perhaps due to this, we lack iconography showing Hospitallers in combat for the 12th to 14th centuries, since it was not its primary function, but rather an extension of its original goal[29] [30].

Iupel *and surcoats.*

Now, what were these warriors wearing? How were they identified? We will focus to talk about this point especially in aspects related to upper garments, such as the *iupel* and the surcoat. And it is that the vision that has lasted the most until our days offers us a knight dressed in a chain mail coat covered by a black surcoat with a huge white cross on his chest[31]. The problem that the historian faces at this point is that of the scarcity of iconography regarding the order of Saint John in its military functions, at least until the fifteenth century, except for a few cases, as we will allude to later. So, to address this issue, we will resort to the statutes of the order of Saint John and the papal bulls, as well as the comparison with the order of the Temple for certain moments, who do have some other iconographic sources.

The first images to which we will refer are those preserved in Cressac, in Charente (France). These are paintings from the 12th century that show us different Knights Templar on horseback with their war supplies[32]. We are struck, once again, by the great disparity when it comes to painting these soldiers, since some appear with white surcoats, others yellowish, and others without surcoats. Characteristic of those who carry the cross on their surcoat is

other brothers." Innocent agreed that the new institution, the Teutonic Order, should follow "the practice of the Temple with respect to clerics and knights and the example of the Hospitallers with respect to the poor and the sick". *Ibidem*, p. 9.

[28] *Ibidem*, p. 10.

[29] "If he fought [the Hospitaller], it was as an extension of his service to the poor". *Ibidem*, p. 62.

[30] This is also clear from the *First General Chronicle*: «Alli fueron otrossi los freyres de la caualleria dell Ospital, que son hermandad que se trabaian de caridad sancta et omillosa por amor de la fe, et todos ençendudos a entençion de aquello que es mester a la Tierra Sancta et en cuyo mantenimiento et deffendimiento ellos uiuen; et aqui tomaron atreuidamientre espada de deffenssion; et fueron en esta batalla en uno con su prior Gutierr Ramírez ». MENÉNDEZ PIDAL, Ramón; *Primera crónica general: estoria de España que mandó componer Alfonso El Sabio y se continuaba bajo Sancho IV en 1289*. Published in 1906. Online source.

[31] See footnote number 7.

[32] - https://arte.laguia2000.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/Jinete-templario.jpeg.
- https://i.pinimg.com/736x/85/44/cf/8544cfe4ec1c7ce10d619935da709fba--romanesque-architecture-knights-templar.jpg

that it is red but small and next to the chest. However, most of them carry the cross on the shield; a latin cross patée. Once again, we are faced with the situation of believing in the intentionality of the author; believing that this was how he saw these *milites* and that, indeed, heterogeneity is what prevails for the centuries under study.

Another image, this time by Matthew Paris in his *Chronica Majora*, shows us a Templar knight carrying the *bauceant* on his lance armed with chain mail and, behind him, a shield with heraldic motifs[33]. No sign of belonging to the order except by the *bauceant*. Is it possible that, on occasions, the Templar knights went to battle with the heraldry typical of their ancient houses and that, in fact, nothing differentiated them in battle from other feudal lords except for the fact that they were grouped around the banner of the Temple? We know that, in the case of the Templars, it happened that large families had the custom or tradition of admitting some of their members to the order, so on some occasions, nepotism could occur[34]. Something similar seemed to happen with the order of the Hospital[35] [36] [37]. The fact that some of these families had some members is due, according to Riley-Smith, to the construction of social relations through generations[38]. Could this family tradition result in the use of family heraldry as a differentiating element within the order?

We must not forget that social relations in the Middle Ages are characterized by social or class distinction at practically all levels: from the use of swords as a distinctive element, as well as more expensive and showy clothes, to the use of heraldry. Perhaps the use of the latter within the order was an extension of this social distinction typical of the feudal world as a way of distinguishing oneself from the rest of the knights, but especially from people of low birth. It would not be surprising, then, that in order to clearly differentiate the *milites* of the Temple in battle, but also to combine the distinctive elements in it, the order would have to request a papal bull in which the right to use the white surcoat with red cross was

[33] https://i.pinimg.com/originals/7f/63/6c/7f636c79599869aee15210b5f77d74a7.jpg
[34] RILEY-SMITH, Jonathan; *Templars and Hospitallers*… op. cit., p. 58.
[35] BARQUERO GOÑI, Carlos; *Los caballeros hospitalarios*… op. cit. p. 99.
[36] LEDESMA RUBIO, Mª Luisa; *Templarios y Hospitalarios en el Reino de Aragón*, Ed. Guara, Zaragoza, sin año, pp. 101-102.
[37] The statutes themselves pick up this tradition in their investiture speech to a new brother: "*Bels dos amix vos requeres la companhia de la Mayzo et aves razo quar motz de gentials homes fan grans preguieyras e an gran gauh quat els podo metre alcun de lor efans o de lor amix en cesta religio* […]"; BONNET, Marie Rose y CIERBIDE, Ricardo; *Estatutos de la Orden de San Juan*… op. cit. p. 265.
[38] RILEY-SMITH, Jonathan; *Templars and Hospitallers*… op. cit. 56.

stablished. However, we will conclude at this point that, as a result of the cases presented, heterogeneity, at least for the 12th century, prevailed when it came to wearing certain clothing, something to which we will return later.

Similar could be the case of the Hospital for the twelfth and early thirteenth centuries. In the military beginnings of the order, it is probable that, before the arrival of knights ready to serve, they went into battle with their own heraldry, all gathering around the *gonfalon* (banner) of the order as a way of distinguishing themselves. This argument seems to be reinforced insofar as the order seems to have had knights at the service of the Hospital in military functions, without actually belonging to it, as also happened in other orders[39]. Therefore, we are talking about lay knights who, for an indeterminate period of time, serve the order and, thus, come to the fray with their own trappings and harnesses, so the distinctive elements during the contest were probably the heraldic motifs that knights own. Again, and as in the case of the Temple, the Hospitallers asked the Pope for a bull granting a proper "heraldry" for this order, something that was already granted in 1259; this may be related to what we have just explained, that is, the excessive use of heraldic motifs under the banner of the order, although we must still add another factor somewhat below related to the garment called *iupel*.

On the other hand, the fact that iconographically we do not have evidence of the military clothing of the hospitallers for the twelfth century and almost the thirteenth century, also responds to the fact that it was not their main facet[40]. Nor is it surprising that the regulations regarding the heraldry to be used in battle were still absent until the middle of the 13th century, which is when the use of mandatory colors in battle was officially confirmed.

Well into the 13th century, we do have more documentary vestiges but, in the iconographic case, we once again hit a ceiling. The only representation found so far is made by Matthew Paris in his *Chronica Majora*[41], dated between 1249 and 1250, in which it represents the three main military orders in the Holy Land and, among them, according to the image, Gerardo, the founder of the order of Saint John of Jerusalem. It appears represented

[39] RILEY-SMITH, Jonathan; *Hospitallers. The History of the Order of St John*, The Hambledon Press, London, 1999, p. 36.
[40] RILEY-SMITH, Jonathan; *Templars and Hospitallers*… op. cit., pp. 17-18.
[41] https://cudl.lib.cam.ac.uk/view/MS-MM-00005-00031/281

as a differentiating element with a red surcoat over the chain mail. The date, 1250, is significant, because it would not be until almost ten years later, in 1259, when Pope Alexander IV issued a bull in which he confirmed to the Hospitallers the mandatory use of this color for war.

From this we believe it prudent to draw the following conclusion: the official concession of the Pope had not yet been issued when this miniature was made, which was not an impediment for the author when it came to representing this order in its military aspect with a color that would be confirmed later. This, we think, is perhaps due to the fact that some Hospitallers used this color in such a way that society already distinguished these warrior monks through the use of red even before 1250. Therefore, we could conclude that probably at the beginning of the 13th century, some Hospitallers were already beginning to distinguish themselves from the rest of the orders and combatants by wearing a red garment in battle, which was normally associated with a white cross. All of them gathered under the banner of the order, granted already in the twelfth century through the bull *Quam Amabilis Deo* in 1130[42] which is also collected by Matthew Paris in different versions[43].

At this point we must reflect on the different aspects when interpreting the aforementioned bull issued by Pope Alexander IV granting the mandatory colors to Hospitallers, since we want to make a nuance.

One aspect within these interpretations defends the idea that there was a differentiation between the knights and the sergeants of the Hospital in battle, the first wearing the red surcoats[44]. Sometimes and depending on the author, it is even interpreted that it is the knights who wear a black surcoat -others say cloak or habit, something completely unthinkable not only because it bothers in battle but also because it is an element to throw to the ground the one who carries it- and the rest of them red; or also, other authors state that before regulations, everyone wore black for war, but as a result of the bull, they would wear red[45]. We believe that they are different erroneous interpretations, while on many

[42] MARTÍN REY Y CABIESES, Amadeo; *Emblemática y uniformidad de la Orden de Malta*, online resource, p. 686.
[43] https://www.pinterest.de/pin/207447126569132579/
[44] RILEY-SMITH, Jonathan; *Templars and Hospitallers... op. cit*., pp. 39-40; MARSHALL, Christopher, *Warfare in the Latin East, 1192-1291*, Cambridge University Press, pp. 49-50.
[45] PÉREZ PEÑA, Rafael; *La soberana Orden de Malta… op. cit.*, p. 92.

occasions the vocabulary referring to garments for the 12th and 13th centuries is complex, with different interpretations but, above all, scarcely given relevance by researchers. We therefore consider, according to the consultation and translation of the bull of Alexander IV of 1259[46], that these interpretations are erroneous for the reasons that we will explain below.

First of all, who should wear these colors? The original text establishes that these colors must be worn by the "*fratres milites*". Around the discussion of what a *miles* is, again we find huge amounts of studies, but what is evident from all of them, is that it is a group that is not at all homogeneous and with many nuances not only within the same period of time, but also between centuries[47]. For the thirteenth century, according to John France, the term *miles* is applicable only to the knight who is part of the nobility, regardless of his status within it. In this way, the military figure of the sergeant would be excluded from this term, since the *milites* encompass a "superior" rank, despite fulfilling the same functions or being equally well equipped[48].

However, with regard to the text under analysis, we believe that the bull most likely refers, in this case, to the use of red garments with white crosses for those who take up arms, that is, brothers warriors -be they sergeants or knights-, thus distinguishing themselves from the rest of the *fratres* who do not wield them, who will have to wear the mandatory black mantle -*chlamides nigras*-. It therefore seems that the formula "*fratres milites*" is a generic way of referring to warrior monks in general since, let us remember, there are other non-military trades within the order.

As the term *miles* has a social connotation, we should exclude the figure of the sergeant in this case. However, the statutes of the order do not make any distinction at any time when treating the friars. These distinctions are observed only when dealing with very specific functions in military aspects, but not even when dealing with the military equipment of each

[46] RANGONI MACHIAVELLI, Luigi; *Documents inédits d'Alessandre IV (11 Août 1259)*, en Rivista del Sovrano Militare Ordine di Malta, junio 1938.

[47] In this regard and for the First Crusade, for example, we have great works. Some of them are the following: FRANCE, John; *Western Warfare in the age of the Crusades 1000-1300*, UCL Press, London, 1999. Pp. 53-63. FRANCE, John; *Victory in the East. A military history of the First Crusade*, Cambridge University Press, New York, 1994; p. 31; KOSTICK, Conor; *Social structure of the first crusade*, p. 160 y 185-186. ZOUACHE, Abbès: *Armées et combats Syrie (1098-1174). Analyse comparée des chroniques médiévales latines et arabes.* Direction des études médiévales, moderns et arabes, Damas- Syrie, 2008, p. 325.

[48] FRANCE, John; *Western Warfare… op.cit*., p. 62.

frayre is any difference observed. In this sense, we also rely on one of the order's statutes (1278), in that at no time does it establish a distinction between knights and sergeants when wearing these colors:

> "*V. Dels iupels* (en otra versión, capels) *vermelhs que los* ***frayres*** *devo portar en fah d'armas:*
>
> *Estabblit es que* ***totz los frayres d'armas*** *d'aysí avan devo portar en fayt d'armas iupel vermelh am la cros blanca*"[49].

On the other hand, the confusion observed between different authors may be due to the fact that the original document issued by Alexander IV refers to the black "*chlamides*", going on to speak of the garments in battle. This term, "*chlamide*", has long been translated by many authors as "surcoats"[50], when in fact they are the mandatory black mantles in the order. Hence the confusion. The bull, in fact, establishes that the order wears the black mantle (in moments of peace) but for war, all those friars who take up arms must wear white crosses on red.

Thus, in 1259 the tendency of the Hospitallers to use these garments of the aforementioned color seems to be confirmed by means of a bull. However, it will not be until almost twenty years later, in 1278, when the statutes officially collect the mandatory use of the white cross on a red background in the same garment that the bull already ruled: the *iupel* –we also find it called *jupeyl*, *jupell* or *gipa* in other sources[51]- and in other distinctive elements of war –such as surcoats-. It is this garment, the *iupel*, which is also repeated in the papal bull -*jupellis*-, which distinguishes, above all and together with the surcoat, the *fratres milites* in battle. This garment is mentioned in the first place in the list of clothes that every friar must wear in a "civilian" environment[52]; however, another statute (although later), mentions this garment again among the military panoply, distinguishing it from the surcoat (*sobreseignals*):

> "*CLXIIII. De las causas que aperteno al marescal de frayres d'ofici morts:*

[49] BONNET, Marie Rose y CIERBIDE, Ricardo; *Estatutos de la Orden de San Juan… op. cit.* p. 127.
[50] RUSH MEYRICK, Samuel; «Observations on the Ancient Military Garments formerly worn in England», *Archaeologia Or Miscellaneous Tracts Relating to Antiquity*, Society of Antiquaires of London, 1821, p. 237.
[51] "Item, tres giponos aptos ad armandum"; HILLGARTH, J.N.: *Un inventario del rey Jaime III de Mallorca (1349), y otros documentos sobre la dinastía mallorquina*, 1990, online resurce, p. 66.
[52] See original mention in footnote number 15.

> *"E dels frayres mortz d'offici aperte al mareschal. Prumieyramen totas manieyras d'armaduras, armas tuquesas, espasas, lansas, cotels de ferir, celas, platinas, alberguos, iupels, sobreseignals, capels d'armas, arcz, dartz, balestas e bacinetz*"[53].

Delving into this garment, the Catalan-Valencian-Balearic dictionary (Alcover-Moll) of the Institut d'Estudis Catalans, collects a historical entry regarding this garment (*jupell*), which indicates that it is very likely to be similar to a tunic (*gonella*)[54]. Thus, we can conclude that this *iupel*, mentioned within civilian clothing, but also military, also used as a distinctive garment in combat, could have a similar morphology to the tunics (skirts, coats) as well as a certain similarity with another element, the tabard, that is, a slightly thicker garment than the skirt, similar in morphology, with shorter sleeves, probably open at the height of the legs –cavalry cut– and that serves as a coat. We would therefore be looking at a garment similar to a reinforced tunic or a tabard, probably. While this garment is worn by all *frayres* and, as we have seen in the civilian aspect of clothing, these garments are not regulated in terms of their color, it is possible that their use in battle -originally- together with own heraldry, will generate a certain confusion when identifying these *frayres* in battle; hence it was generally necessary to have a separate heraldry for the order in the conflict.

But, why, if a bull was necessary, did it take almost twenty years to make all this mandatory in its statutes? The question is very difficult. For Christopher Marshall it is unknown, since his approach was about the use of the color red only by knights, not understanding why twenty years later they extend it to all combatants[55]. By our side, once we have argued the fact that we consider that said bull extended to all the warriors of the order, we think that, perhaps, it could be due to the sufficiency of a papal bull as a mandatory document and it was not necessary to collect this rule in the statutes; but it was done in 1278, why? Perhaps the continued use of their own heraldic symbols was still evident after the bull?

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[53] BONNET, Marie Rose y CIERBIDE, Ricardo; *Estatutos de la Orden de San Juan… op. cit.* p. 264.
[54] "A la mànega de la gonela o del jupeyl"; http://dcvb.iecat.net/
[55] "The reasons for this change are unclear; perhaps the Hospitallers were finding it difficult to recruit sufficient numbers of brother knights", MARSHALL, Christopher; *Warfare in the Latin East… op. cit.*, p. 50.

The use of the color red and white cross

Another issue to address is the fact of using those colors. It is well known that red and white are the symbols of the crusaders and the order continued the tradition of using those colors, only inverted on their weapons. Instead of predominantly white and a red cross in the style of the Temple, perhaps they decided to use them in the opposite direction. But this is not the object of reflection. The use of these colors is actually prior to the military facet of the Hospitallers. The rule states that the deceased in the Hospital must be covered with a red canvas and a white cross, whether they are friars or pilgrims:

> "*VI. Dels liehs dels mortz:*
>
> *Item après, ay establit e comande que los liehs dels mortz sian fays a la manieyra archanceya si come les liehs dels frayres mortz e sian cubertz d'un cobertor vermelh am la cros blanca per desus*"[56]. Dated in 1181.

This relationship between the military aspect and the "cover" intended for the deceased was already highlighted by Jonathan Riley-Smith, but without going deeper into it[57].

The use of these colors is also associated with the archangel Saint Michael and we have reliable evidence of this. In the church of the Hospital of St John in Valencia, the chapel dedicated to this saint still preserves part of the original polychromy, revealing the figure of an angel, identified with Saint Michael, carrying a spear and a shield with the coat of arms of the order and, on the opposite wall, the archangel holding a spear with a Hospitaller banner weighing the souls of the deceased[58].

On the other hand, in Sos del Rey Católico, there is a hermitage dedicated today to St Lucy but, in the 13th century, it was dedicated to St Michael. The mural paintings, from the end of the 13th century that are preserved in it, narrate one of the appearances of the archangel in the 5th century AD, after which, Sipontines and Beneventines faced the, by the time being,

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[56] BONNET, Marie Rose y CIERBIDE, Ricardo; *Estatutos de la Orden de San Juan... op. cit.,* p. 103.
[57] RILEY-SMITH, Jonathan; *Templars and Hospitallers op. cit.,* p. 18.
[58] - https://valenciabonita.es/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/IMG_2126.jpg
- https://valenciabonita.es/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/IMG_2130.jpg

pagan Neapolitans[59]. Interestingly, those who fight for the archangel wear surcoats and red vests with white crosses[60].

This association is curious and, we think, may be due to the dedication of the order in military affairs to the *princeps militia coelestis* and not to the patron saint of its hospital functions, that is, Saint John. The veneration and invocation of different saints in the military orders is not uncommon, as would happen for example in the case of the Teutonic order, with its invocation to St Mary[61].

Can we establish any relationship between the canvases placed on the deceased and the archangel who carries those same colors and weighs the souls of these deceased in the balance? Indeed, there is a statute collected by the Hospitallers in which special relevance is given to the friar who sings to St Michael for the souls of those who "have passed this century", so that this relationship exists within the order, of course:

> "*XLVI. Del capela que canta sanh Michel:*
>
> *Establit es que lo capela que canta a sanh Michel non tenha point de annual mas cante per las armas dels maestres mortz e trespassatz d'aquest segle e dels frayres e de las bonas gens que ley so sosterratz*"[62].

Thus, St Michael seems to be associated with these colors; would they adopt these colors for battle before or after relating them to the archangel? While we do not find a coherent answer at the moment, we will simply pose the incognita.

The Hospitaller panoply.

Finally, it remains to address the heterogeneity at the "international" level with respect to the panoply of a thirteenth-century warrior in Western Europe. In this regard, it should be said, again along the lines previously discussed with Cressac's paintings, that there are notable

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[59] LACARRA DUCAY, María Carmen; *Pinturas murales en Santa Lucia de Sos del Rey Católico* (Zaragoza), recurso en línea.

[60] https://i.pinimg.com/originals/1e/25/0a/1e250ad14434465309e310b59b64e430.jpg

[61] PALACIOS ONTALVA, J. Santiago; «Cultura visual e iconografía de la Reconquista. Imágenes de poder y cruzada», en *Revista de Historia Medieval, Anales de la Universidad de Alicante, nº 17*, 2011, p. 346. To expand on this aspect, both Enrique Rodríguez Picavea and Carlos de Ayala Martínez can offer more detail in this regard.

[62] BONNET, Marie Rose y CIERBIDE, Ricardo; *Estatutos de la Orden de San Juan… op. cit.* p. 121.

differences when studying the military equipment of the knight in the 12th and 13th centuries. In the case of the Templars, this is evident thanks to the representations made in frescoes in different places[63] , such as San Bevignate, Italy[64].

In the case of hospitallers, Riley-Smith points out the possibility that, indeed, there was a "more relaxed attitude towards uniformity in dress"[65]. If we look at the iconography of the 13th century, with the *Maciejowski Bible* and the Cantigas de Santa María as its main object, we can observe many similarities, but at the same time, many differences regarding military equipment. We also find differences even in the vocabulary, being able to find identical clothes, although with different names.

As far as the Iberian Peninsula is concerned, the fully protected feudal knight wears chain mail over the tunic and, over this, a surcoat, usually with short sleeves, where the knight's heraldry is usually located, often on the sleeves. On top of all this, he places the *perpunte*, that is, an additional sleeveless protection element, which consists of a superimposition of layers of linen and wool or, sometimes, cotton, straw husk or bran[66], so the heraldry is seen only on the sleeves of the surcoat that is below the *perpunte*. It seems that this element, the *perpunte*, is not usually seen in the rest of European geography, which makes us wonder if, in the case of the military orders based in the Iberian Peninsula, they could use it. This option has been proposed by an illustrator, Alfonso Cánovas who, despite some notorious errors such as the color used for the Hospitallers, has captured this option with remarkable success, in our opinion[67].

We can observe how, in some images belonging to the Cantigas de Santa María that illustrate the order of Calatrava and that of Uclés, there are garments similar to the *perpunte* with sleeves below the same color as this[68]. An aspect to be highlighted is not only the verification that the represented military orders make use of the *perpunte*, but also the fact that they only carry the cross as a "corporate" element on the horse's guard and, some, on the helmets, but not on the surcoats and *perpuntes*. All this reinforces our idea that the

[63] RILEY-SMITH, Jonathan; *Templars and Hospitallers... op. cit.*, p. 39.
[64] https://i.pinimg.com/originals/9a/7b/f5/9a7bf5cd27088ed8bb809c70e123be0e.jpg
[65] RILEY-SMITH, Jonathan; *Templars and Hospitallers... op. cit.*, p. 40.
[66] https://c8.alamy.com/zoomsfr/9/e4d7d83a91d041418d97e2774e564ffb/2c9gy4r.jpg
[67] https://i.pinimg.com/originals/3f/98/7b/3f987b0737e7f5fcda5c384f6aab455c.jpg
[68] https://i.pinimg.com/236x/97/e6/83/97e6839b9e4170e884f1a130d711d108--tattoo-forearm-muslim-women.jpg

concept of uniformity in the military aspect is not developed for the twelfth and thirteenth centuries for the military orders, so that for the order of Saint John we could probably find the cases already mentioned.

Also, to be taken into account is the fact that in most representations of military orders, and perhaps also that of Saint John, they appear with open helmets in the *cervellera* style. This is mainly due to the fact that the use of closed helmets makes vision and hearing issues, so that a coordinated attack with charges, recoils and again charges[69] (and more in these militaries trained exclusively for it) is especially difficult to do with these impediments. The inability to communicate properly on a confusing battlefield[70] could break the cavalry formation into groups[71], probably those formed by the closest knights, while those further away would be out of the line of sight and hearing of whoever wore this type of helmet. Therefore, in groups as disciplined as the military orders, it is more than likely that the superior protection known as *cervellera* or similar, was more common than closed helmets. This follows both from the rule of the Temple and the statutes of the Order of Saint John[72].

In the case of the Iberian Peninsula, we must also talk about the scarcity of means of the military orders such as the Temple and the Hospital. The main mission of the commanderies outside the Holy Land was to supply the main houses of the Middle East with everything possible to continue the fight for the defense of the holy places. However, despite the relative self-determination of the order of St John in the Peninsula due to the fight against Islam, it was still part of their obligation to send weapons, horses and food to the Holy Land. This sometimes generated a certain lack of means in some peninsular commanderies and fortresses, this being sometimes a possibly exaggerated excuse to avoid going to the call of the Hispanic kings, but which seems to be true in many other cases[73].

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[69] GARCÍA FITZ, Fco.; *Castilla y León frente al Islam. Estrategias de expansión y tácticas militares (siglo XI-XIII).* Universidad de Sevilla, 2005, pp. 390-393.
[70] *Ibidem*, p. 399.
[71] *Ibidem* p. 391.
[72] "[…] *Prumieyramen totas manieyras d'armaduras, armas turquesas, espasas, lansas, cotels de ferir, celas, platinas, alberguos, iupels, sobreseignals, capels d'armas* […]" (in other versions, *capels de fer*, that is, similar to *capellinas*, open helmets with a metal brim). BONNET, Marie Rose y CIERBIDE, Ricardo; *Estatutos de la Orden de San Juan… op. cit*. p. 264.
[73] LEDESMA RUBIO, Mª Luisa; *Templarios y Hospitalarios… op. cit*., p. 76.

In this way, both the apparent scarcity of supplies, as well as the already mentioned geographical variants, could possibly result in the use of lighter panoplies typical of the Peninsula in some cases. It would therefore be feasible, as we believe, to be able to see Hospitaller sergeants dressed in the manner of Iberian peons, that is, with a tunic and, as a cheaper element of protection than chain mail, the so-called *perpunte*.

CONCLUSION

Based on the above, it can be concluded that the order of Saint John, for the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, has been largely influenced by later visions such as those already mentioned. However, thanks to the statutes and the iconography, we can know that the only corporate garments are the mantle or the raining capes, the rest of the clothing being totally oblivious to a mandatory use of black or grayish color, in addition to the use of crosses.

With regard to the military field, it can be said that by the 12th century, it is very likely that the Hospitaller Knights, just as the Temple seems to do, would wear visible chain mail or surcoats with heraldry typical of the families from which they came, while there are no early regulations and the knights came with their own supplies to join the orders, gathering around the ensign and this being the only thing that identifies them as members of the order in battle.

By the 13th century, on the other hand, these knights, together with the sergeants, would already wear red surcoats with white crosses in some places such as the shields, one of the sides of the chest or, why not, on the sleeves of the surcoat, in case of the Hospitaller knights in the Iberian Peninsula, in the traditional way of the peninsular feudal lords and even in the *cervelleras* and *capels de fer*. The statutes are clear when regulating that all those who carry arms must wear the color red and a white cross, so for those who followed the norm, we believe that an image similar to the one that would be given in the 13th century could be the one reproduced in Comthurey Alpinum[74]. However, we must not forget the possible use of geographical variants in some of the garments used by some Hospitallers, such as the use of the *perpuntes* in case of lack of chain mail, etc.

[74] https://i.pinimg.com/originals/56/33/01/563301fca240b43f1f202e7e410305a9.jpg

Thus, we have been able to observe how difficult it is to trace these material aspects. Despite this, we believe that the conclusions we have reached offer a very plausible explanation and characterization of this order in its civil aspects, but above all military, for the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.

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